

REQUEST FOR HISTORIC AND SCENIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION ACTION

V.A. **BRYAN AND CELINA MCKERNAN, APPLICANT** (PROJECT PLANNER: SEAN REILLY)

PUBLIC HEARING to consider **Demolition No. 357**, a proposal to demolish an existing 2,794 square foot single family dwelling over 50 years of age located at 130 Sierra Vista Drive (APN: 0176-173-09-0000). This project qualifies for an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15301(I)(1) (Existing Facilities) of the CEQA Guidelines.

HISTORIC AND SCENIC PRESERVATION MEETING: February 2, 2023

Planner: Sean Reilly, Principal Planner

PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC HEARING

1. Chairperson declares the meeting open as a public hearing.
2. Chairperson calls upon staff for report.
3. Chairperson calls for questions/comments from members of the Commission.
4. Chairperson calls upon applicant, or its representative, for comments/testimony.
5. Chairperson calls for comments/questions/testimony from members of the public (3 minutes per speaker).
6. Chairperson calls upon the applicant, or representative, for rebuttal comments (5 minutes).
7. Chairperson closes the public hearing.
8. Commission considers the motion(s) and votes.

SYNOPSIS

1. Historic Designation: The structure is not designated as a historic resource, nor is it located within a historic district, by the City of Redlands, the State of California, or the United States Government.
2. Existing Land Use: Zoning: Residential Estate (R-A)
General Plan: Very Low Density Residential
3. Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission submittal dates:
 - (A) Submittal Dates: August 11, 2021
 - (B) Date Accepted as Complete: September 23, 2021
 - (C) Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission Meeting: February 2, 2023
4. Attachments:
 - (A) Location Map and Aerial Photo

- (B) Existing Conditions Photographs
- (C) Historic Resource Evaluation
- (D) Preliminary Environmental Checklist
- (E) Resolution No. 2023-01 with Exhibit A (Conditions of Approval)

PROPOSAL / BACKGROUND

The applicant, Bryan and Celina McKernan, have submitted an application to demolish a 2,712 square foot single family residence located at 130 Sierra Vista Drive which they purchased in 2019 (Attachment A – Location Map and Aerial Photograph). The single-family residence was originally constructed in 1958 for Robert Baker, who was the owner of a local Redlands interior design and decorating company. Clare Henry Day, an architect known for his mid-century modern work throughout the inland empire is listed on the original building permits as the architect who designed this home. The home is a one-story Mid-Century Modern style building of wood post-and-beam construction. It has a 'T'-shaped plan, asymmetrical composition, and an attached garage (Attachment B – Site Photos).

Recognizing that the home was designed Clare Henry Day, who could be considered a notable architect, City staff hired a qualified consultant to prepare a Historical Resource Evaluation (HRE). Historic Resources Group completed the HRE for the property in January 2023, which included significant property research, and evaluated the home to determine its eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register of Historic Resources, and/or as a City of Redland Historic Landmark or Historic Resource. The HRE is included as Attachment C and portions of the Historic Resources Evaluation are included within the analysis section of this report.

In 1958, permits were issued for construction of the eight (8) room single family residence and carport. Aerial images verify that the structure was constructed as of 1959. Although there have been numerous alterations to the home, permits were limited to items such as re-roofing, heating and air conditioning, and septic tank improvements.

The home is not a designated historic resource, nor has it been previously surveyed. However, in accordance with Redlands Municipal Code Section 15.44.070 for the demolition of a structure of fifty (50) years of age this demolition requires review by the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission.

The Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission is authorized to determine the potential historical significance of the structure and the need for any further environmental review, it may also subsequently approve, condition or deny the demolition permit application. If the Commission determines that the structure has no historical significance and the permit application is approved, the application is exempt from further review by the City unless an appeal is made to the City Council. If no appeal is filed within the time provided, the Development Services Department may

issue the demolition permit in accordance with the Redlands Municipal Code.

If the Commission determines that the structure has historical significance, the Commission would then direct staff to conduct additional environmental review and subsequently approve, condition, or deny the application.

ANALYSIS

The subject property is not recorded in the list of local historic resources and is not subject to the procedures in Section 2.24 of the Redlands Municipal Code. However, Section 15.44.070 requires that prior to the demolition of any structure over 50 years old, the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission is required to determine whether the structure is historically significant. Section 2.62.170 establishes the City's criteria for historic significance.

Section 15301(I)(1) of the California Environmental Quality Act states that the demolition and removal of individual small structure (one-single family residence) is exempt from environmental review. In addition, Section 15064.5 of the California Environmental Quality Act refers to the California Public Resource Code, which provides guidance as to what is considered a "historic resource" or "eligible resource."

The analysis in this section is based upon City staff's research and the research and analysis contained with the Historic Resource Evaluation (HRE) prepared by Historic Resources Group dated January 2023. The HRE was prepared using primary and secondary sources related to the history and development of the property, including reference materials available at the A.K. Smiley Public Library in Redlands and field inspection of the property. Identification of physical features and historic integrity were ascertained during the site visit and through review of available building plans and other archival materials.

Below, City and State criteria for historic significance are listed with justification as to why this structure is not historically significant.

A) Local Criteria for Significance

Section 2.62.170(A): It has significant character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Redlands, State of California, or the United States.

Permits were issued for construction of the home in 1958 and aerial images verify that the structure was constructed as of 1959. The home is a modest example of the post-World War II housing boom in the city, when large swaths of Redlands were developed as housing tracts and developments. It is one of over 3,700 residences built during this decade and was not associated with an early or notable tract development. As such, the

building does not have significant interest as part of the development of Redlands. A comprehensive newspaper search and research conducted at the A.K. Smiley Library's Heritage Room by City staff did not reveal any evidence that this structure makes a significant contribution to the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, State, or Country.

Section 2.62.170(B): It is the site of a significant historic event.

Based on the research conducted by staff through local and regional newspaper database searches, building records, and ownership history, it has been determined that the land on which the building is located is not the site of a significant historic event.

Section 2.62.170(C): It is strongly identified with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture, history or development of the city.

Staff conducted research at the A.K. Smiley Library Heritage Room and through newspaper.com. The table (as shown below) lists the residents associated to the subject property based on the information provided by the City Directories located at the A.K. Smiley Library's Heritage Room and Newspapers.com.

Year	Name(s)	Occupation
1959-1971	Robert Baker	Interior Designer
1975 - 1998	Paul R. Ennis	Doctor
2003 - 2008	Rick Pence	Construction Contractor
2008 - 2018	Gregory Misbach	Doctor
2018 - Present	Celina and Bryan McKernan	Construction Contractor

The newspaper research that was conducted for each of these individuals revealed no significant information. The individuals listed above had professional occupations and are not known to have significantly contributed to the culture, history or development of the city and further, the information found related to these individuals was not closely tied to this specific home.

As previously stated, the home was designed by notable Redlands architect Clare Day. Clare Day is known for his Mid-Century Modern style of design for residential, commercial and institutional buildings. Some of his contributions to the local area include Clement Middle school, Redlands Paint on Redlands Blvd., Cram Elementary School in Highland, and several homes within the south hills of Redlands. While the home was designed by Clare Day, it is not one of his more notable works. In addition, while Clare Day is a notable local architect, he would not be someone who is considered to have significantly contributed to the culture, history or development of the City.

Section 2.62.170(D): It is one of the few remaining examples in the City possessing distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen.

There are several homes with Mid-Century Modern architecture in the City of Redlands. Although this home may not be one of the few remaining homes in the City of this architectural type, it is one of approximately 13 homes in Redlands designed by Clare Day. At the time of its initial construction, the residence exhibited significant character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern style and reflected Day's work as an important local architect. However, the building has undergone substantial alterations since its original construction, including relocation of the primary entrance, replacement of most windows and doors, enclosure of the original carport, replacement of some original siding, and re-cladding of the prominent exterior fireplace. Because of these alterations the property is no longer an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style nor an important example of Clare Henry Day's work. Day was extremely active in Redlands in the 1950s and 1960s, and there are many houses still extant with higher integrity in the City that better reflect his significance as a local architect. The home does not retain sufficient integrity to convey any potential significance under this criterion.

Section 2.62.170(E): It is a notable work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has significantly influenced the development of the city.

Please see the response above for Section 2.62.170.D. The City's building permit records indicate that the architect for the home was Clare Henry Day, and that the home was built in 1958. Clare Day is a notable local architect responsible for the design of several Mid-Century Modern homes in the City. The home has been substantially modified from its original condition and there are other existing, more intact examples with higher integrity representing the architect's work, therefore this would not be considered an important example of Clare Day's work.

Section 2.62.170(F): It embodies elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship that represents a significant architectural innovation.

As discussed under Section 2.62.170.D above. At the time of its initial construction, the residence exhibited significant character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern style. However, the building has undergone substantial alterations since its original construction. Because of these alterations the property is no longer an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style. Therefore, the home does not retain sufficient integrity to convey any potential significance under this criterion.

Section 2.62.170(G): It has a unique location or singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city.

The property is located at 130 Sierra Vista Drive on the south side of the City of Redlands in an area with relatively low-density residential development. Sierra Vista Drive does not carry high traffic volumes and is designed with no curb, gutter or sidewalk and it is located at a lower elevation than most of the surrounding homes. Additionally, the home's surroundings are hilly with dense trees and landscaping which limits views of the home from the adjacent streets. For these reasons, the home is not particularly visible from the roadway and would not be considered a significant or familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community, or city.

Section 2.62.170(H): It has unique design or detailing.

Please refer to the response above for Section 2.62.170.D. At the time of its initial construction, the residence exhibited significant character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern style. However, the building has undergone substantial alterations since its original construction, including relocation of the primary entrance, replacement of most windows and doors, enclosure of the original carport, replacement of some original siding, and re-cladding of the prominent exterior fireplace. Because of these alterations the home does not retain sufficient integrity to convey any potential significance under this criterion.

Section 2.62.170(I): It is a particularly good example of a period or style.

Please refer to the response above for Section 2.62.170.D. At the time of its initial construction, the residence exhibited significant character-defining features of the Mid-Century Modern style. However, the building has undergone substantial alterations since its original construction. Because of these alterations the property is no longer an excellent example of the Mid-Century Modern style.

Section 2.62.170(J): It contributes to the historical or scenic heritage or historical or scenic properties of the city (to include, but not be limited to, landscaping, light standards, trees, curbing, and signs).

The home does not contribute to a group of historic or scenic properties within the City. It is not located within any historic district, and it is not individually designated as a historic resource. The property is located at 130 Sierra Vista Drive on the south side of the City of Redlands in an area with relatively low-density residential development. Sierra Vista Drive does not carry high traffic volumes and is designed with no curb, gutter or sidewalk and it is located at a lower elevation than most of the surrounding homes. The home is not particularly visible and does not contribute to any scenic heritage or contribute to any scenic properties.

Section 2.62.170(K): It is located within a historic and scenic or urban conservation district, being a geographically definable area possessing a concentration of historic or

scenic properties which contribute to each other and are unified aesthetically by plan or physical development.

Refer to the response under 2.62.170.G and 2.62.170.J above. The site is not located within any historic district and would not be considered a part of a collection or concentration of historic or scenic properties that contribute to each other. The home is located in an area with rolling hills and lower density development. The home sits on a knoll that is surrounded by thick trees and vegetation, and it is not particularly visible from the adjacent properties or roadways.

B) CEQA Criteria for Significance

In addition to the City of Redlands criteria, Section 15064.5 of the California Environmental Quality Act refers to the California Public Resource Code, which provides findings for what may be considered a “historic resource” or “eligible resource”. Staff has provided responses related to each of these findings below.

A. Associated with events have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California History and cultural heritage.

Please refer to the response above for Section 2.62.170(A). In addition, a thorough record search of local newspapers and City directories did not indicate that this property is associated with any specific events that may have contributed to California’s history or cultural heritage.

B. Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past.

Please refer to the response provided under Section 2.62.170(C), above. The structure is not associated with the lives of persons important in our past.

C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values.

Please refer to the response provided under Section 2.62.170(D), above.

D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information in prehistory or history.

Based on the review of the criteria above as it relates to the demolition of the structure, it is not historically significant and approval of the proposed project will not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5 further, there is no evidence that the site is likely to yield valuable information regarding pre-history.

Criteria for Historic Integrity

In addition to meeting one or more of the criteria for historic significance, a property must have “integrity,” which is the ability of a property to convey its significance. The HRE evaluated the property based upon the National Parks Service’s seven aspects of integrity for historic resources. These are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The preparation of the HRE included a field inspection and a comparison of the original building plans to the existing site conditions. During this comparison by Historic Resources Group, the following alterations were discovered:

- The carport was enclosed to serve as an attached garage at an unknown time. This work included removal of the original girder and door, repaving of part of the driveway, and installation of composite siding along the south façade. A new door was installed in the enclosed garage along the west façade and a new vinyl window was installed along the south façade.
- Along the east façade, the original slumpstone concrete block wall between the residence and carport was removed. Along the same façade, board and batten siding and a large, fixed glass window were also installed. The front door was relocated from its original location along the southeast corner of the east façade to a more prominent centralized location along the façade. Stone veneer was added around much of the building and was used to reclad the original slumpstone chimney.
- On the north façade, several fixed glass clerestory windows were removed and replaced with plywood. A new vinyl casement window was installed. The family room was enlarged to the north, which included removing some board-and-batten siding and installing new vinyl sliding doors.
- Along the west façade, several new window openings were created, fitted with vinyl windows. The majority of the original windows were replaced, including the original louvered windows, with either plywood or vinyl casement windows. A glass block window was installed in the master bathroom. Original plywood cladding was also replaced.

The analysis found that the property only retained integrity in two of the seven categories (location and setting). The home remains in its original location on the site, and it retains the original setting. However, due to the alterations detailed above, integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling are not intact.

C) Conclusion of Analysis

According to guidance from the National Park Service, “A property important for illustrating a particular architectural style or construction technique must retain most of

the physical features that constitute that style or technique.” And as stipulated in the eligibility criteria of the Redlands Historic Context Statement, residential properties from the post-war era that are eligible for designation for architectural merit must be an “excellent or rare example of an architectural type from the period” and requires residential properties from the post-war era retain higher thresholds of integrity for listing under architectural merit. According to the context statement, “A property that is significant for its architectural type, for its embodiment of a significant innovation, and/or as a contributor to the historical heritage of the city should retain integrity of design, feeling, and association, at a minimum, in order to be eligible.”

Although the building was originally a Mid-century Modern design by notable and prolific local architect Clare Henry Day, it has undergone substantial alterations and no longer retains sufficient integrity to convey any potential significance under the required Criteria. Therefore, the Baker Residence is not eligible for listing in the National Register or California Register, or for designation as a City of Redlands Historic Landmark or Resource.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Section 15.44.060 of the Redlands Municipal Code requires an environmental checklist be prepared for all demolition permit applications involving structures over 50 years old (Attachment D). This checklist is intended to provide an environmental analysis of the project, which is used to aid in the determination of the structure’s eligibility for consideration as a “historic resource” or an “eligible resource,” and if demolition of the structure would qualify for a Notice of Exemption pursuant to Section 15301 of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines.

Section 15301(l) of the California Environmental Quality Act provides a categorical exemption for certain types of demolitions and states that the demolition and removal of individual small structure (one-single family residence) is exempt from environmental review. However, a categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Staff has analyzed the demolition of this structure utilizing both the City’s criteria for historic designation and the State’s guidelines for determining the structure’s eligibility as a historical resource in conjunction with the Historic Resource Evaluation prepared by Historic Resources Group. Based upon the upon Staff research and the Historic Resource Evaluation, Staff believes that the home at 130 Sierra Vista Drive is not eligible for consideration as a “historic resource” or an “eligible resource” and meets the criteria for an exemption from CEQA.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission approve Demolition No. 357 based on the facts presented in this staff report and subject to the recommended Conditions of Approval.

MOTIONS

If the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission deems it appropriate, staff recommends the following motion:

“I move that the Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission adopt Resolution No. 2023-01 approving Demolition Permit No. 357, based on the facts within this staff report and subject to the attached Conditions of Approval.”